



**Public Hearing Written Testimony of
Acting Commissioner Linda Agnew
Labor and Public Employees Committee
February 18, 2010**

Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with written testimony regarding two bills on your public hearing agenda today. My name is Linda Agnew and I am the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Labor.

I respectfully request that you vote favorably upon S.B. # 65 and S.B. # 95. Both bills are technical in nature and carry no fiscal impact to the state general fund. Specifically:

S.B. # 65: AAC Unemployment Compensation Extended Benefits

This proposed language is needed to conform to federal law. The Agency currently complies with federal law in practice. However, to ensure conformity with federal law, the language in this bill provides that governmental employers (Indian tribes, state, town, city or other political or governmental subdivisions) must pay 100% of the money expended for extended unemployment insurance benefits (known as EB benefits) for its employees who reach the need for such benefits (after they exhaust the 26 weeks of regular unemployment compensation benefits and any additional benefits). Private sector taxable employers, and non-profits, need only contribute 50% of the money expended for extended benefits. Governmental employers, as described above, are given the choice under Connecticut statute to either (1) pay unemployment taxes on a quarterly basis on the wages of covered employees (entities that choose this option are called "taxable employers") or (2) reimburse the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund for the exact amount of benefits paid to former employees (entities that choose this option are called "reimbursing employers"). Governmental employers that choose to become contributing taxable employers (instead of reimbursing employers) shall pay their taxes as contributing employers for all regular and additional benefits, based on the employer's experience rate. There is no state or municipal fiscal impact associated with this proposal.

S.B. # 95: AA Preserving Good Cause for Late Filing of Certain Unemployment Compensation Appeals

Under current law, an unemployment compensation claimant has 21 days to appeal a decision from the Administrator on the issue of whether the claimant received unemployment benefits to which he or she was not entitled, and whether the claimant was liable to refund such overpaid benefits to the Administrator. The appeal must be postmarked or filed within 21 days of the Administrator's determination. Under current law, a party must show good cause for filing an appeal beyond the 21-day time frame for all other types of unemployment compensation issues. This bill ensures that the current practice of applying the good cause standard to such overpayment cases is reflected in the law, and it is technical in nature. There is no state or municipal fiscal impact associated with this proposal.

Thank you for this opportunity. Please feel free to contact my staff or me if you need additional information.